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DE RUEHML #1982 1290756
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 090756Z MAY 06
FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0900
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS PRIORITY
RUEHRH/AMEMBASSY RIYADH PRIORITY 0688
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 001982

SIPDIS

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STATE FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, NEA, S/CT
NSC FOR H. MORROW

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/09/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [PHUM](#) [PTER](#) [RP](#) [BM](#) [IR](#) [SA](#)
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S MAY 5 MEETING WITH FOREIGN SECRETARY
ROMULO

REF: A. MANILA 1886

[B](#). MANILA 1884
[C](#). STATE 66050

Classified By: Ambassador Kristie A. Kenney for reasons 1.4
(b) and (d)

[1](#). (C) Summary. In a May 5 meeting, the Ambassador thanked
Secretary of Foreign Affairs Romulo for the Philippine

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government's support for efforts to keep Iran off the UNHRC.
She urged the GRP to pursue concerns about terrorist
financing when President Arroyo visits Saudi Arabia on May 7.
Romulo offered the Ambassador an overview of the recent
ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting in Indonesia, at which the
Malaysian foreign minister reported that he was barred from
meeting with the Opposition on his recent trip to Burma.
Romulo also asked whether he might be able to meet with
Secretary Rice when he visited the U.S. in June. He

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suggested that President Arroyo might also visit at that time
if she could count on meeting with President Bush. End
Summary.

[2](#). (C) The Ambassador met privately on May 5 with Secretary
of Foreign Affairs Alberto G. Romulo. The Ambassador raised
the question of assuring appropriate membership on the United
Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) and particularly the
importance of keeping Iran off the UNHRC (ref B and C).
Secretary Romulo concurred and indicated that the Philippines

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would stand with the U.S. in opposition to Iranian membership
on the UNHRC. The Ambassador thanked Secretary Romulo for
this support.

[3](#). (C) The Ambassador then turned to President Gloria
Macapagal-Arroyo's May 7 visit to Saudi Arabia, urging that
the President use the opportunity to raise concerns about
terrorist financing issues with senior Saudi officials.
Secretary Romulo was very receptive to this idea.

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[4](#). (C) The Ambassador also sounded out Secretary Romulo
regarding May 1 demonstrations in Manila (ref A). Romulo
stated that he was pleased that the protests were peaceful;
they showed Philippine democracy at its finest: the
demonstrators were vocal but well-behaved, and the police

were restrained and respectful of human rights. This analysis echoed similar comments made to the Ambassador by Philippine Secretary of Defense Cruz on May 3.

15. (C) Secretary Romulo gave the Ambassador a brief report on the annual meeting of ASEAN foreign ministers, held in Bali on April 19-20. Romulo drew particular attention to the foreign ministers' discussion of Burma. Romulo said that the foreign ministers received a discouraging report from Malaysian Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar on his recent visit to Burma, during which Albar was barred from meeting with Aung San Suu Kyi and other Opposition leaders.

16. (C) Secretary Romulo also noted that he would be in Washington on June 17, helping commemorate the centennial of the arrival of the first Filipino immigrants to the United States. Romulo said he hoped to meet with Secretary Rice during his visit, and host her at the centennial commemoration dinner, if possible. The Ambassador indicated that the Secretary was extraordinarily busy and that the Ambassador did not know what Secretary Rice had scheduled for that date. Romulo also suggested that President Arroyo would make time to visit the U.S. for the June 17 commemoration if she could be assured of a meeting with President Bush regarding Philippine and bilateral counterterrorism efforts. The Ambassador underscored the USG's appreciation for Philippine counterterrorism efforts but noted that the press of Washington business would make a meeting between our two Presidents in June unlikely. Romulo then suggested that perhaps the best course would be for him to telephone Secretary Rice for a short chat, in lieu of meetings at this

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time. Ambassador suggested they touch base on this when Romulo returned from Saudi Arabia.

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Kenney